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SOUND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN A WELFARE STATE

By

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In the recent Secondary Education Commission's Report the Commission says: "In a changing world problems of education are also likely to change". Nay, they are certain to change. Nay, they have changed in modern independent democratic federal India which is eager to become a Welfare State in the best sense of the phrase. It is hence necessary to adapt Indian Education to New India so that we may recombine order and progress and welfare and happiness in a new manner and in a new measure, hereafter. The educational pattern must follow the new pattern of life and must in its turn, create a newer pattern of life.

Everybody knows what Macaulay did to establish not only the Indian Penal Code but also to establish the modern system of Indian Education. English was made the medium of instruction. We know also in what contempt he held Indian Literature and Culture. The British rulers decided to spread European literature and science among the natives of India. The meagre funds devoted by them for the purpose of education were utilised for that purpose alone. The English rulers wanted Indian clerks to help them in the task of the administration of the country. As the new education became a passport for entry into government service, it

became immensely popular among the intelligentsia in the land. But education ceased to be national. The Indian languages were neglected. It was largely literary and did not give much prominence to science. It was not practical except to a very slight extent. There was no provision for vocational or technical courses. In fact university education dominated secondary education which in its turn dominated elementary education.

The S.S.L.C. came in to supplement and largely supplant the old matriculation. But there was no effective diversification of courses and the Indian languages still stayed out of the classroom. English having been made the medium of instruction and examination, secondary education has continued to be too bookish and literary and unadapted to the varied aptitudes of the students. It did not lead to the diverse forms of skill needed for the diverse forms of employment which should exist in a modern civilised society. The university colleges had more students seeking admission than seats for them. The result was frustration ending in indiscipline. In short education was not well related to life nor was life well related to modernity. Neither education nor life fostered initiative and individuality, and neither was a joyous

adventure. We cannot have a political and economic reflowering without a cultural reflowering. Real education should be for a living life and for super-life. What should be imparted must not be mere bookish instruction but should be cultivated taste and also eagerness and fitness and capacity to acquire more and more knowledge all through life.

This is why the recent Commission takes its stand on democratic citizenship and vocational efficiency and development of personality and education for leadership. But the snag will arise when an endeavour is made to relate secondary education to the new basic education which is the accepted pattern of primary education and to the new pattern of university education. Education must be conceived as a unity and must be related to life wisely and well.

The Report of the Secondary Education Commission has accurately summed up the defects of the present system of secondary education. It mentions the unilinear nature of education, the dominant role of universities in the control of secondary education, the lack of practical work, the failure to cater to the varying aptitudes and interests of the student population, the meagre facilities for technical education at varying levels, the lack of proper co-operation with industry and commerce, and the need for greater co-ordination between the different ministries at the Centre as well as in the States. The Commission's report has given us valuable suggestions about the removal of such defects. It has recommended diversified courses at the higher secondary stage and the starting of multi-purpose high schools. It has also emphasised the importance of agricultural schools and technical schools and schools of commerce besides the usual types of studies. The reorientation of the objectives of rural schools and their impact on rural life have also been clearly defined in the report.

Let me take first of all the harmonisation of elementary education and secondary education. Mahatma Gan-

dhi's scheme of basic education has been accepted in principle by India and Article 45 of the Indian Constitution lays down as a directive principle of State Policy that all children between the ages of 6 and 14 should get free education. The pre-basic or nursery schools need not be considered here. As a matter of fact the number of basic schools in the country is small mainly owing to the paucity of basically trained teachers. One gets confused by the clash of the old and the new terminologies. We hear about pre-basic, junior basic, senior basic and post-basic schools, and we hear also about primary or elementary schools, middle schools or lower secondary schools and high schools or higher secondary schools. Even at the earliest stage the idea of teaching everything round a craft is really not workable. In practice the so-called basic crafts are only spinning, weaving and carpentry which in many cases have nothing to do with the later lives and careers of a large percentage of the students. Let us resolve to speak only of basic education, secondary education and university education, discarding all the other terms which clog and confuse our thinking and our discussion. Though we all agree about the dignity of manual labour and about the training of the hand and the head and the heart (some may add also the soul) going together hand-in-hand, we must perforce realise that it is vain to imagine that all knowledge could and should be taught round a craft. Basic education should therefore be child-centred and culture-centred and craft-centred. We cannot explain Alexander's invasion of India by seeking to explain it in terms of carpentry. What should be the basic crafts in rural basic schools and what should be the basic crafts in the urban basic schools should be settled suitably in the light of local knowledge and experience. The fact is that standards 6 to 8 in basic schools and Forms I to III in secondary schools are parallel, except in the fact that English is not given as much prominence in the former. Now that the new Secondary Education Commission visualises a higher secondary stage of four years and

a degree course of three years and Dr. Radhakrishnan's University Commission Report has taken a similar view, we should be able to have basic education up to the fourteenth year, secondary education for four years and collegiate education for three years on a uniform pattern all over India. Let us, however, never forget that the bulk of our children will leave school at the age of eleven corresponding to the junior basic stage.

The Commission has done well in recommending the introduction of multi-lateral or multi-purpose schools, in which there will be common subjects (such as languages, social studies such as history and geography and economics and civics, general science, mathematics, etc.) as well as diversified courses such as academic, secretarial, artistic and technical. In such schools, the most important work to be done by teachers is to study the natural bias and aptitude and skill of each student and turn him into the particular diversified course suited to him. Of course the parents also must be consulted in the matter. The Commission's report points out also that in such multi-purpose schools it would be easier to transfer a wrongly classified pupil to his proper course than to send him to another school altogether. It rightly points out also that while there should be a certain number of such multi-purpose schools, there will also be uni-lateral schools where intensive training will be provided in particular types of vocational courses according to the occupational needs of the community and the locality.

In my view the new scheme of secondary education will succeed or fail according as the diversified courses are wisely planned and worked or unwisely planned and worked. At the end of it a majority of students must take up various vocational pursuits while a minority will go into the universities. For the former there must be higher technological institutions which will enable the country to have skilled technicians with diverse forms of technical ability. Agriculture being the most

important of all industries, there must be provision for education in agriculture and horticulture and animal husbandry especially in the secondary schools in rural areas. Under the new scheme of elementary education in the Madras State—known as Rajaji's scheme—an endeavour was made to relate rural elementary education to rural crafts and bring into living touch the home and the school besides increasing the number of students under the double shift system. But that system has now been given by the Madras State. We have to plan anew the diversified courses in our secondary schools so that secondary education may be a natural flowering and fulfilment of elementary education. Modern technical instruction of a diversified and fruitful type is a costly affair and will not succeed unless and until the State spends larger sums for such a fruition.

But technical education in a wisely diversified form will lead nowhere and will certainly not lead to employment unless the new technicians are absorbed in new industries and in modernised progressive old industries. Mere technical education will not solve the problem of unemployment but will increase and accentuate it. The attempt to expand industries and make existing industries more modern and up-to-date and efficient must be the primary and co-operative endeavour of the State and the leading industrialists who must jointly decide the respective public and private sectors in industry, having in view industrial progress and the welfare of the people. The best utilisation of the natural resources of our motherland and an ever-increasing demand for skilled technicians for such a high national purpose and the improvement of our educational system so as to provide such skilled technicians must keep pace with one another and must go hand-in-hand.

In regard to women's education, we must see to it that every type of education open to men should also be open to women. The Indian Constitution has provided that all citizens shall have equal opportunities for work and em-

ployment and appointment to office and that there should not be any discrimination against any citizen on account of religion, race, caste, creed, sex or place of birth. But the education of girls should have a home bias for obvious reasons. Further, woman is the guardian of emotional and artistic and spiritual elements in human nature. The education given to women must enlarge their minds without warping her nature in the abovesaid directions. It is also commonsense to avoid co-education of boys and girls at the secondary stage and to have separate colleges for women, if we wish to keep up high moral and spiritual standards. Special provision should be made to teach home craft, music, drawing, painting, etc. for girls. Home craft will include home economics, household management, nutrition and cookery, mother-craft and child-care, home nursing, etc.

In regard to languages the Commission recommends (1) that during the middle school stage every child should be taught at least two languages and that English and Hindi should be introduced at the end of the junior basic stage, subject to the principle that no two languages should be introduced in the same year ; (2) that at the high and higher secondary stage at least two languages should be studied, one of which being the mother-tongue or the regional language. It must be taken as settled that the medium of instruction should be the regional language. In each linguistic area culture hinges on language and the deepest affections of the people cling round their mother-tongue. Where in the case of a student the mother-tongue and the regional language differ, it is commonsense that the latter also must be learnt and will be the medium of instruction as it will be the language of the large majority in the area. If the regional language is not made the medium of instruction and examination, it will never become modernised and grow in power and flexibility. Hindi also will have to be studied as it is our *lingua franca* and is the federal language and the official lan-

guage of the centre and as it is the language spoken by the biggest linguistic group among Indians. English also must be studied as it is the international language and the language of science and commerce. We may well remember that in the U.S.S.R. a foreign language is a compulsory subject of study in the Soviet Middle and Secondary schools.

Nor must we forget the importance of the classical languages. The Commission rightly says that "the classical language (Sanskrit) is being completely ignored". So long as the boys who take up Sanskrit have to attend four periods of instruction in the regional language and so long as Sanskrit is bracketed as is done now, with the more boosted and popular Hindi for purposes of selection, Sanskrit will be taken by fewer and fewer students and this will take away the bread from the mouth of Sanskrit Pundits who will hence become fewer and fewer in numbers—which fact will in its turn adversely affect Sanskrit even more than before. The old rule which made a student to take the regional language or Sanskrit was far better. Now that the regional language is the medium of instruction for all the subjects in our high schools, where is the need for asking Sanskrit students to read Tamil for four periods a week ? I requested a former Minister for Education (Mr. Avinashilingam Chettiar) to reduce the number of periods to one or two but he did not agree.

But all the abovesaid wise changes will not take us far without discipline and character and without physical culture. Both these aspects were neglected before and are largely neglected even now. The former will never be secured without proper religious and moral education. Nor will the latter be secured without a proper correlation of yoga-asana discipline and of extra-curricular activities such as scouting, national cadet corps, first aid, excursions, debates, dramas, drawing and painting, rowing, swimming, gardening, etc. The medical examination of all the

children in schools is vital. The modern stress on audio-visual education is an equally vital factor in modern Indian education. Equally important it will be to reduce the domination of external examination tests and to make the external examination tests and the internal school tests and the school records of pupils real factors in the evaluation of education. The Commission says well that there should be only one public examination at the completion of the secondary school course and that the system of compartmental examinations should be introduced at the final public examination.

In short the secondary school must be a community centre and we must make the education given therein national and scientific and practical and capable of fitting our children for livelihood and life and super life.

Bearing the abovesaid aspects in mind and realising the need for a self-contained secondary education and a proper type of university education which will conduce to leadership and originality and research which are urgently needed in a modern democracy, I am in favour of the abolition of the intermediate course and the institution of a three-year degree course along with the addition of one year in the higher secondary stage. Some years ago I moved a resolution to this effect in the Senate of the Madras University but I did not succeed in that endeavour. I am glad that Dr. S. Radhakrishnan Commission's University Education Report and Dr. A. Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar Commission's Secondary Education Report have envisaged this long-needed and salutary reform. The intermediate course did not fit in well with the secondary course or the degree course. Hereafter, if the change envisaged above is effectuated, there will be higher secondary schools which will incorporate an additional year of study at the school stage. Further, the candidates who wish to join the professional courses in the Faculties of Medicine, Engineering, Veterinary Science, Agriculture, etc. will be required to undergo a

pre-professional course of one year subsequent to the pre-university course; and this pre-professional course will be such as would lead in an integrated manner to the professional studies required for the particular branch. The first degree course in the Faculties of Arts, Science, Oriental Learning and Commerce would be of three years' duration. The Honours Course will be of four years' duration subsequent to the pre-university course. I feel that this scheme will give to us an ideal scheme of secondary education and an ideal scheme of university education. But its success will depend on how the scheme is going to be implemented and worked. I do not like the additional year at the conclusion of the S.S.L.C. examination to be a mere seventh form merely copying and continuing and slightly augmenting and improving the S.S.L.C. scheme of studies. As the medium of instruction in all the subjects in the S.S.L.C. course is the regional language, the standard of English has gone down, whereas the medium of instruction in the colleges is even now in English. Further, there is a craze to have the glossary of the scientific terms in each linguistic area in that regional language. The result is that India is fast becoming a Tower of Babel in that respect. We must adopt in all linguistic areas the English scientific and technical words while explaining the scientific subjects in the regional languages. In the pre-university class, the medium of instruction should be in English till we reach a time when the medium of instruction at the university stage can be the regional language English being a compulsory subject of study throughout. In the pre-university classes the university should prescribe the syllabuses and the courses of study and should also conduct an examination at the end of the year. The main question is whether the administrative control should be with the university or the Education Department of the Government. There are advantages and disadvantages in both controls. But on the whole it is better to have control by

the university as the pre-university course is to fit the students for the university. The best solution will be for the second grade colleges to become pre-university schools. The present matriculation examination should become the university entrance examination and the latter should be held twice a year by the university. The pre-university schools should prepare the students therein for such examination and teach the pre-university subjects through the medium of the English language. Such subjects should include modern English literature, Indian history, basic economics, Indian Constitution and Physiology.

The aim of modern education is a combination of culture and expert knowledge in some field of activity. Education means both acquisition and utilisation of knowledge. But the knowledge should be inter-connected and harmonised knowledge capable of being applied to modern life and not disconnected and unblended and unpragmatic knowledge. Quality should dominate quantity. Professor A. N. Whitehead says well: "The whole period of growth from infancy to manhood forms one grand cycle." In this cycle he clearly demarcates the stage of romance and the stage of precision and the stage of generalisation and synthesis. Freedom and discipline must be interfused. Liberal education and

technical education should not be foes but should be friends and comrades. We must test theory by practice and sublimate practice by theory. The stimulation of the imagination by literature and art, the stimulation of the precision of thought and reason by science, and the stimulation of joy in productive work must go together. We must aim in our schools and colleges and universities at the simultaneous organisation of thought and will and happiness. There must be a continuous widening of the horizon of the mind. The human mind must be regarded as an imprisoned artesian fountain and not as a mere machine. The new educational technique needed in and for Free India hereafter is an inter-relation and harmonisation and synthesis of elementary education of the basic type which should be modified so as to become culture-centred, diversified courses of secondary education fitting some students for university education and equipping others with diverse forms of agricultural and industrial and commercial ability to be fitted into an agriculturally and industrially and commercially prosperous modern India, and an intensified and amplified form of university education which will fit students for the learned professions and produce the leaders of the nation and create a passion for research and stimulate inventiveness and originality.

THE S. I. T. U. PROPAGANDA

Sri K. S. Chengalroya Iyer, Hony. Publicity Officer, S.I.T.U. Protection Fund, Ltd., visited the following schools :—

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|----|----------------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Board High School, Dharmapuri on | 26—8—1954. |
| 2. | do. Hosur on | 2—9—1954. |
| 3. | do. Kadathur on | 6—9—1954. |
| 4. | do. Harur on | 15—9—1954. |
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SOUND EDUCATION—WELFARE STATE

Every child is entitled to good and healthy upbringing, medical attention, and nursing and plenty of joyful active life so that it may have chance to grow to its full stature. But lack of knowledge on the part of parents about child rearing is wide spread in our country and most of the children are born and brought up under conditions not conducive to their full growth. The State also is slow to recognise its obligations to the child. A child that is handicapped physically, socially and economically is a challenge to education. The purpose of education is to aid life's opportunities and eliminate its obstacles. The handicapped child is unable to take full advantage of the opportunities education affords and the damage done to it is unfortunately irreparable. Most parents have no proper conception of their responsibilities to their children and their development. It is the task of true education to make the parents realise them. In this connection it is worthwhile to understand the spirit and the significance of the following special features of the rights of children prepared by the Balkanji Bari :—

1. The child shall live in a free land, in a free atmosphere and in a free environment. Every opportunity for the all-round development shall be available to him, unhampered by any limitations of caste or creed.

2. The child shall be provided with a happy home environment, free from fear and chastisement. It shall be adequately fed and clothed and brought up with love and understanding.

3. The child and its mother shall be assured proper pre-natal, natal and post-natal care.

4. The child shall receive, at all stages of the growth up to adolescence, adequate medical aid. Its health and well-being shall be the prime concern of its parents or guardians and of the State.

5. The child shall receive the best education to which its talent entitles

him—education that is both liberal and useful and that prepares for good citizenship and service. Its education shall be a first charge on the revenues of the State.

6. The child has a right to play and recreation, and sufficient facilities for the purpose must be provided for it by schools and the local authorities.

7. The child shall be protected by legislation from exploitation in any form for the benefit of parents and guardians.

8. The child who is backward or defective shall be provided with special institutions for its care and education.

9. The child in the village shall have the same privileges and facilities that are assured to the city child.

The following principles are intended for the guidance of the State :—

The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the whole people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice—social, economic and political—shall inspire all the institutions of national life.

The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing :—

That the strength and health of workers, men and women and the tender age of children shall not be abused and that citizens shall not be forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age and strength.

That childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.

Every citizen is entitled to free primary education and it shall be the duty of the State to provide free and compulsory primary education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years.

EDUCATION, THE CONCERN OF ALL

By

S. R. VENKATARAMAN, B.A., B.L.,

Secretary, Servants of India Society, Madras-14.

If the educational system is to function effectively in a democratic State, it must be decentralised allowing a good deal of latitude and freedom for citizens to run schools consistent with the resources and needs of the community. In all educational effort, the co-operation of the Government, the public, the teacher and the pupils is both explicit and implicit. There must be perfect harmony, mutual trust, understanding and unity of action between the four agencies in the discharge of their obligations and responsibilities towards schools. Now let us take the responsibility of the Government :

(a) First and foremost, it must broadly lay down the fundamental principles of a sound educational system which should be capable of application for meeting the varying needs of every situation that may arise from time to time.

(b) Such an educational system should never be the handmaid of any political party in power. The main consideration should be the spread of education along sound lines among all sections of people and in all branches of knowledge without distinction of race, culture, creed or religion. Here rests the great responsibility of a democratic government to hold the balance even, undisturbed and uninfluenced by politics, racialism and communalism. Every section in the community must have the freedom, liberty, independence and security to serve the cause of education according to its own light provided it does not go against the broad principles laid down by Government.

(c) Liberal and sustained financial aid to educational institutions is the prime responsibility of Government. The rich heritage of the community

which invests the recipient of it with intellectual and moral distinction must be available to every one in the country and not to the elect. The test of a truly democratic society is that it should continuously concern itself with equalising the opportunities of education, to every one in the community, so that each member of the community may grow up to his or her full stature as a human being, with all those qualities that the term connotes. It is the imperative duty of every democratic government to financially aid such institutions to the maximum extent possible.

(d) A trained personnel is the *sine quo non* of an efficient system of education. The selection of first class men—we cannot afford to have second best—to run our schools and their proper training is a matter of vital importance for the success of all educational institutions. The teachers must not only be imbued with idealism and impelled by the urge to foster and spread the great human heritage and all that is implied in the term and also be fully familiar with the technique of imparting the lessons of that heritage to his pupils. In this difficult task, namely the discharge of the heavy social obligation of the teacher, the parents and the community in general have a great part to play. In fact they must be invaluable and indispensable allies of the school and the teacher and *vice versa*.

(e) There is a tendency in some quarters to treat the teacher with scant courtesy. It is the primary obligation and duty of the Government to safeguard the integrity and the interest of teacher. Economic security, reasonable tenure, opportunities for continued study, protection from the assaults of busy bodies and pressure groups which seek to impose on schools their own

peculiar brand of morals and patriotism, the right to share and shape the educational policy and lastly enlightened citizenship should be assured to every teacher by Government. It should also set up a Tribunal to adjudicate the disputes arising between the teacher and other interests. All these are necessary in the interest of free education in a democracy.

There is a saying that "a good Government governs the least". This is very necessary in the field of education. Too much meddlesome interference and too often by Government should be discouraged and resisted. It should take power to bring to book those who misuse the school funds and the buildings for personal or narrow private and political ends. It should resist the temptation to extend to an undesirable extent its authority over educational institutions, by trying to pass on to teachers untried and unscientific methods of teaching and usurp the function and responsibility of the teaching profession. Democratic Government cannot thrive in a straight jacket. It thrives best where there is freedom, trust and confidence. While trying to safeguard the interest of educational institutions, it should not play the Dictator.

The teacher is the pivot on which the entire educational system moves.

(a) The teacher must be one possessed of a steadfast loyalty to the democratic way of life, an abiding interest in the welfare of the children entrusted to his care, and an awareness of the social, political and moral implications and consequences of all that he undertakes. He must be vigilant and alert to sense the violations of these democratic principles, extend them to neglected fields and help the lamp of reason to burn brightly, to champion the cause of the lowliest and the last and to combat every force, totalitarian, communal and credal that is foreign and opposed to democracy.

(b) The teacher must maintain a high level of professional competence. It is not enough if he is technically

qualified as a teacher. He must have discriminating understanding of the impact of the challenges to democracy and must have the moral courage and tact to resist them and not to allow others to exploit him or his institution. He must have a proper appreciation of the teaching profession as an opportunity to achieve high moral purpose in his own life. To fight for the maintenance of human freedom for enriching the social life of the community by inspiring and undertaking and directing social welfare activities are equally the responsibilities of the teacher.

(c) The teacher's responsibility is also to shape the educational policy along right lines. It implies keeping himself informed of the latest educational methods evolved in other countries and examining those methods in the light of Indian conditions. It also means that he should constantly endeavour to enrich the educational programme of the school and thus avoid the dull routine of formal instruction or the formal three R's.

In conclusion, the teacher should establish mutual understanding and trust with the people and the community at large. He should be neither a recluse nor be vulgar, but be familiar with all those who count in the community. He should be above narrow cliques and parties. By virtue of his knowledge, experience and understanding of the ways of the world, he should be in a position to render proper advice to people without identifying himself, with, or lending his support to any party. He must not be a snob and parade himself as the 'Know All'.

Public co-operation in this field can take different ways. The public are the basic source and final judge of the school programme. Their obligations to the school, are also equally great. The public generally speaking, everywhere take a complacent view, namely that so long as children attend school and the fees are the same, they do not very much bother themselves about the present day curriculum, however un-

suited and outmoded it be. Their opinions about educational matters are mostly shaped by politicians. They rarely consider new schemes dispassionately and arrive at an independent judgment. This is a matter to be deeply deplored. There is need therefore, for each parent and member of the public to keep himself properly informed of the history of education in the world and the century of experience of the great experts in the field.

The public should not be actuated by narrow loyalties either provincial or communal. Schools must guard against the in-roads from these vested interests and this could be effectively done if the public realise that in a temple of learning like the school such corrupting influences have no place whatsoever. They must keep themselves in day to day touch with the school, the problem of their boys, the needs of the school etc. and try to contribute their best to the solution of the

difficulties so that the content and quality of education do not deteriorate.

The public have to respect and repose trust in the teacher. There must be perfect understanding between the teacher and the public. Where this is lacking, the teacher feels disconsolate, forlorn and an alien affecting his efficiency and quality of education imparted to the students. Ultimately, it is the children of the community that suffer and the public which is vitally interested in the educational progress of their children. At least from this point of view the public must consider their obligation towards the teacher and the school as the most paramount one cast on them. It may be asserted without any fear of contradiction, that the public which do nothing else but discharge their obligations and responsibilities to the school and the teacher can be considered to have made its greatest contribution to the advancement of the community.

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EDUCATION AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

In the old days, when the school was thought of primarily as the place of learning, children went there every day and acquired a certain quantum of knowledge. But in modern times a larger conception demands that the schools should be an institution in which something more than knowledge is imparted; education is more than knowledge and life is more than learning.

All activities belong to play. No longer do we look upon play as a useless activity of childhood to be discarded when grown up. On the other hand, we understand and appreciate its educative value and function. To us play no longer suggests antagonism to work.

The co-curricular activities seem to be partly in human nature and partly in modern educational philosophy. Wherever human beings gather together the desire to unite and do certain things, the desire to organise themselves for certain purposes seems inevitable. So it is in school life also. The effective performance of school duties and the cultivation of desirable habits and attitudes are best secured through group motivation and group activity. The learning is done under the pleasantest conditions.

A greater impetus to these activities was given with the introduction of the Reorganised Secondary Education curriculum, and a further encouragement during the past two or three years with the departmental instructions in the matter of collecting and administering various special fees such as Audio-visual education fee, Scouting and Excursion fee, Literary Association fee, craft and practical activities fee and the like.

In general the success of every activity depends largely and mainly on the headmaster of the school on the enthusiastic measure of co-operation he gets from the members of his staff. If teachers guide the pupils, enthuse them by their own infectious enthusiasm and stimulate their work, the purpose of the school activities will be fully realised. So it is hardly an exaggeration to say that to the extent the teachers give their personal attention and guide the pupils, to that extent success is assured.

The National Cadet Corps is now functioning in about 100 schools in our State. In a country like ours, in the context of events today, the importance of N.C.C. training to high school boys in their formative period of life is supreme. Physically they have the benefit of parade drill in the open air which does them a lot of good by keeping them fit and helping the development of their physique. Mentally and morally they learn to cultivate a sense of cleanliness and smartness of appearance, of courtesy and consideration in dealing with their fellows and above all a strong sense of discipline and proper behaviour.

Activities such as Scouting have now become common in every school, but herein too the fullest support of enthusiastic scout-minded teachers trained in scout craft is absolutely needed to make the scout movement or scout activities really live and useful and properly functioning.

Regarding school excursions, it is found that the school children enjoy being taken on educational excursions and even the lower middle class parents are not only willing but are prepared to pay extra money to their boys and girls to join the school excursion trips. They occupy a powerful force in the education of boys enabling them to see and learn many facts of great educational value.

The working of the school debating societies and literary and aesthetic activities, the running of school magazines—these afford excellent opportunities for boys for training in self-expression. Pupils should be associated with them as much as possible. It is a wonder to see lots of our boys working hard with a sense of joy during school-day celebrations and other school functions in several ways to make the function a success as a result of their training in aesthetic sense.

In the administration of special fee funds intended to support these activities, it is necessary to give the largest measure of freedom and initiative to headmasters who choose a committee of assistants for each kind of activity.

The following is a list of activities and their outcomes :—

ACTIVITIES.	OUTCOMES.
1. Hobbies : Picture collection, news clippings, and charts and preparation of riddle booklets and scrap books	Increase interest, understanding, retention and meaningfulness of pupils' concepts and stimulate imagination.
2. Current events.	Furnish background to news and intelligent information.
3. Dramatization.	Aid pupils in better understanding, develop imagination and appreciation and artistic self-expression.
4. Excursions and visits.	Study at firsthand, co-operative planning, group and individual responsibility, cosmopolitan spirit.
5. Discussions and debates.	Stimulate imagination, co-operative planning, training in sensible talk.
6. Celebration of main festivals of principal religions.	Help to take responsibility for various activities, tolerance for other religions, teacher-pupil, social contact.
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8. Use of Library.	Selection and evaluation of material, reference to sources, development of interest, discovery and use of sources of information.
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An eminent Hindu thinker has said that "true education consists not only in imparting knowledge but also inculcating a sense of devotion to God and a sense of discrimination between right and wrong, between good and bad, and between the just and unjust, which is an essential requisite for social life.

A high placed Muslim parent deplored that "his one grievance against modern education has been that it grievously lacked the religious background".

Equally emphatic was the assertion of His Grace the Archbishop of Madras. While saying that "the Godless education that the public schools in India have imparted during the past 100 years has much to account for indiscipline, the disorder and the anarchy in the individual and social lives of the young men of India", he stressed that religion must form an important part of the education of the youth of India, that public schools, should provide for it and that "religious neutrality which is the policy of the Indian Government does not connote religious indifference".

A Zoroastrian writer says as follows : Fundamental principles of ethics common to all religions, viz., brotherhood of all mankind, plainness and simplicity of life, emptiness of riches, kindness to animals, temperance, sobriety,

humility, piety, truthfulness, honesty and just dealing with fellowmen of whatever caste, colour or creed, in every common life, in business, in politics, in national and international affairs, for peace and prosperity of all nations living on God's fair earth, white, black or brown".

Religious instruction should be on broad principles the most important of which are common to all religious systems. Broad religious ideas which are consistent with reason and conscience, without laying stress on meaningless superstitions and ceremonies, have to be taught—"essential religious truths of an universal and all-embracing character."

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EDITORIAL

The warning :

Presiding over the special convention of All-India Secondary School Teachers held under the auspices of the Secondary Education Section of the All-India Federation of Educational Associations at Bombay, Dr. Amaranatha Jha uttered a strong warning to Government and the people of this country that "unless the working conditions of teachers are improved, they might be driven to desperation and do immense mischief which several generations will not be able to undo". He called attention to the restraint that teachers are imposing upon themselves all these years, being conscious of their role as guides to the young. The conditions under which they have been working, the insecurity of their tenure, the meagre and inadequate salary, the poor equipment available in the schools, and more than all, the social disregard almost amounting to contempt and the many restrictions imposed upon them almost of a totalitarian nature—are sufficient to provoke them to open revolt and to act in a 'wild way'. But, as Dr. Jha ably put it, teachers in India had been acting with a commendable measure of restraint doing their work as a sacred mission. If those in authority should exploit this attitude of the teachers and merely content themselves with making statements about the nobility and sacredness of the teachers' calling and expressing hopes that the States would, as soon as their finances would permit, take up the revision of teachers' salaries, they would only increase the frustration. It may be that this frustration may not have the

'nuisance value' of the kind that Government are anxious to avoid, but, as Dr. Jha pointed out, any further delay in improving the service conditions of teachers will be at the risk of the future welfare of the country. We endorse his call to administrators not to imperil the future by their short-sighted policy in respect of teachers' service conditions.

* * *

Education or Unemployment Relief :

We are told that nearly 2,500 single teacher schools are to be opened in the current year in schoolless centres with a population of 1,000 and less and that these new schools could be in charge of those educated unemployed who have registered with the Employment Exchange and who are willing to take up work as teachers in those tiny villages. Two special officers have been appointed to select the areas and organise the schools which would be under the control of the District Boards and financed for the first three years by a grant from the Union Government. As a step in the direction of providing education facilities in our rural parts, this should prove of great benefit but we understand that few of the large number of educated unemployed are volunteering for work under the scheme. The financial emoluments are even better than what fully qualified trained and certificated teachers employed in the Elementary Schools recognised and aided by the State are getting. Our Education Minister draws the obvious conclusion

— that teaching in villages is unattractive and that teaching itself is not a profession to attract and hold young persons. .

Surely this situation should open the eyes of our Education Minister and make him see and realise at what sacrifice the thousands of our elementary school teachers—(93% of them are trained) are working in our schools. As Dr. Jha put it, they do so not for the financial advantages. They are there almost as if on a mission. It is unfair to Government to exploit this attitude of this large group of patient workers and keep on playing the barren tune of 'NO FINANCE'.

As if to insult the teachers who have chosen the profession and qualified themselves by training and preparation and who do not hesitate to go to the remote villages, the Government is sponsoring these Single Teacher Schools as a measure of unemployment relief, untrained teachers being offered a higher salary and being placed in sole charge of a school which may have pupils of different age groups.

Normally the rules require that an untrained teacher would be permitted in a school if at least 60% of the teaching personnel are fully qualified. But here the single untrained teacher is master of the whole situation. Educationally it is unsound. It will be bad for the children and it will not help in securing the co-operation of the parent in the matter of educating the child when he finds the educated unemployed young and incompetent teachers getting regular monthly salaries while himself has to sweat the whole day for his tiny morsel,

We strongly urge that the Madras Government should represent to the Union Government the unsoundness of entrusting to such people the working of the Single Teacher Schools. Only teachers of considerable experience can manage, with a fair measure of success, plural class teaching. The State Government should secure the freedom to allot these untrained teachers to large schools with 5 or 6 trained teachers, so that they may have guidance and their work may be effectively supervised, senior teachers from these institutions being put in charge of the new schools.

Again our State has been wisely and consistently pursuing a policy of discouraging single teacher schools. (At one time these were so large that very drastic steps were taken and their number has now been reduced to about 4,000. Of these nearly 70% are under Local Boards.) There should be at least two teachers in each of these institutions if their strength could not warrant one teacher per class. It is the duty of the Madras Government to explain THE WHY of its policy all these years in respect of Single Teacher Schools and obtain the necessary freedom to adequately staff such institutions, so that while there will be a measure of unemployment relief, educational needs could be fully met.

* * *

The Progress of Education :

We offer our hearty felicitations to The Progress of Education of Poona on the completion of thirty years of useful work. The Progress of Education which was ushered into existence by a small team of devoted teachers, soon established for itself a great reputation

and has since been regarded as a high class educational journal of India; fearless in its criticism, just in its appraisal and strong in its advocacy of the cause of teachers and children. We know, only too well, the difficulties of conducting an educational journal. The Progress of Education is not a journal conducted by any teaching organisation. It has to stand on its own legs and the journal owes not a little to the late M. R. Paranjpe—one of its founder editors. We do not wish to minimise the services of the other members of the Editorial Board, but we do feel that all will agree that M.R.P. (as he was affectionately called)

gave his utmost to keep the journal going and maintain its high standard.

Educational journals have a great part to play and teachers have a great responsibility in enabling these journals to perform their service. It will be in the best interests of Education, if Government could render adequate financial aid to such educational journals.

We wish the Progress of Education all success and hope that it would continue its useful work with faith, courage and devotion for many many years to come.

THE SOUTH INDIA TEACHERS' UNION

Diary for the month of October 1954.

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|------------|---|
| 4—10—1954 | The South Indian Teacher — September 1954 — published. |
| 12—10—1954 | The President was appointed as a member of the Secondary Education Committee. |
| 14—10—1954 | Education Week booklet sent to all affiliated teachers' associations. |
| 14—10—1954 | Journal Committee meeting. |
| 23—10—1954 | Executive Board meeting. |
| 23—10—1954 | Sri N. D. Sundaravadivelu, Director of Public Instruction was entertained at Tea. |